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MAY 7, 2014 • LOS ANGELES, CA • INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND COMMERCIAL FRAUD

2 Southern California men sent to prison for illegal counterfeit goods imports

LOS ANGELES — A Rosemead businessman was sentenced Thursday to 31 months in federal prison for importing luxury fake goods worth more than \$2.3 million, including bogus Nike, Coach and Gucci products, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Kevin "Peter" Wang, 54, coordinated the illegal importation of 11 shipping containers of counterfeit apparel, according to court documents. From 2008 to 2012, the counterfeit goods were smuggled in shipping containers through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The containers, which were purposely mislabeled as toilet paper and garment hangers in order to evade detection by U.S. customs officials, included included fake Nike shoes; Coach, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton handbags; and NFL, NBA, and NHL jerseys.

In addition to the prison term, Wang was ordered to serve an additional six months of home detention and pay a \$10,000 fine and \$50,000 in restitution.

"Trafficking in counterfeit merchandise is a multi-billion dollar global business that robs governments of vital revenues and the industry of its due profits," said Claude Arnold, special agent in charge of HSI Los Angeles. "HSI is committed to dismantling these schemes because the profits from such illegal ventures often go to fund more criminal enterprises."

In a separate counterfeit goods case investigated by HSI, Hamlet Ayvazyan, 37, of Glendale, was sentenced last week to 12 months and a day in prison for his role in importing counterfeit car accessories. According to court documents, Ayvazyan, the owner of Speedvision Motorsport of Glendale, imported wheel rims from a Chinese business known as Shandong Chiping Xinfu Aluminous Product Co., Ltd., which offered wheels that purported to be from luxury car brands including Audi, BMW, Mercedes Benz and Porsche, Land Rover and Cadillac.

Ayvazyan's scheme unraveled in January 2012 when U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers inspected an ocean container that contained 430 wheel rims that bore counterfeit Mercedes-AMG logos, with Ayvazyan and Speedvision as consignee. Following meetings between Ayvazyan and undercover HSI special agents who posed as customers, investigators executed a search warrant in February 2012 at Speedvision, where agents found 189 wheel rims bearing counterfeit AMG marks. Prosecutors say Ayvazyan claimed that the goods were replicas, but the marks on the wheels were unauthorized copies of the registered Mercedes-AMG trademark.

Investigators learned that Ayvazyan paid approximately \$100 for each rim and sold them for \$200, which was substantially less than the manufacturer's price for legitimate, which was as much as \$2,000.

In addition to his prison sentence, Ayvazyan was ordered to pay a \$4,000 fine.

Updated: 11/18/2024

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